

creed but the Bible. They seem to me a right worthy people, and I shall make them a present of my house.

Having now enjoyed, gentle reader, an opportunity of meeting for several successive weeks with the congregation to whom I presented my church, and having by enquiry and personal intercourse made myself pretty well acquainted with them, I propose to give you some account of this rather remarkable, if not singular people.

The congregation numbers in all fifty. Their personal appearance at first on entering the church struck me as a little odd. They all dress most noticeably plain. I do not mean that either the men or women have any uniform fashion after which they cut, nor that all of either sex dress in the same kind of goods. I mean strictly that they dress very plain. The material in which the men dress, although remarkably neat and faultlessly clean, I take to be quite cheap. One thing among the females struck me with peculiar force—not one has her ears pierced, and they wear no jewellery. I have not seen a single ear-pendant, wristlet, or ring; nor among the men so much as a breast-pin or watch-seal. I learn that they have these things at home, and wear them on ordinary occasions, but never in the house of God. In that holy place they say all should appear in a style remarkably neat and pure. I think I have never seen a worshipping assembly exhibit, in its outward appearance, so little of earth as this. Being curious to have a reason for it, as I took for granted they had one, I approached one of the overseers of the congregation and asked him why his brethren dressed thus. He blushed and modestly replied, "Friend, your question is legitimate, but it elicits from me a rather painful answer. There are many poor in our community, who cannot afford to dress better than you see us dressed. They would feel pained by a difference in dress which should constantly remind them of this circumstance. Some of these are here to-day and are members of our body, but you cannot distinguish them. These brethren are very dear to us, and we are unwilling to hurt their feelings by dressing better than you see us dressed. Besides, we think it right in us to appear thus in the presence of God. We hence have a double pleasure in it." I turned away from this good man saying in my heart, these are Christians indeed, and hence know how to "condescend to men of low estate."

Again I think I notice something very peculiar in the *greetings* of these people on coming into their house. They grasp each in the hand so quick and strong, and give each other a look so cordial, sweet, and kind, that I declare it is worth while attending their church merely to see them meet. Nor can I detect in their intercourse even the slightest approach to vulgar familiarity. They evidently know how to be courteous, and not only so, they certainly love each other most tenderly. The warm virtuous look of the eye, the amiable unsmiling smile,

together with a mannerism indescribably bewitching, most clearly evince this. I am in the habit of attending church at several other places besides this, but nowhere else do I see anything even approaching what I witness here. These meetings affect me much. My feelings are often deeply moved, and for the life of me I cannot tell why. Every body seems delighted to attend the place. The very atmosphere you breathe seems quick with divine life. The attraction to be here is irresistible, and then you linger on the spot as if held in some strange spell.

In their order of worship several things strike me as noteworthy. In their singing, which I pronounce excellent, I discover they prefer the older type of tunes. "Old hundred," for instance, seems a favorite with them, and in almost all their Lord's-day meetings I notice they sing

"Safely through another week."

They seem, too, to be much attached to that fine old piece,

"O, Thou Fount of every blessing."

In all this I must confess I think their taste excellent. Those grand old airs are the very melody of the soul, and those matchless hymns the very utterances of the pious heart. When the Holy Scriptures are to be read they all stand listening in profoundest reverence. While the reading is proceeding each member holds in front an open Bible, looking on. This done they all resume their seats. They stand, they tell me, as a token of respect for the holy word of God. I could wish the custom universal provided it prevailed through real respect for the Bible and not as a mere form.

Their prayers, in some respects, are remarkable. Every member in the church takes part in them when called upon. They are very free from all conventional forms and stupid phrases. They seem to be more a simple confiding talk with God than anything else. Yet to me there is something grand in those simple measured petitions. They become deeply affecting. While listening to one the other day I felt as if my heart would break. Determining, if possible, to discover in what this secret power lay, I resolved to jot down one of these prayers and study it. I here transcribe it:

"All merciful Father, thy little flock, still helpless and poor, are in thy presence again. In the name of our blessed Mediator we come, and since unworthy, in deep humility, Turn not thy face away from us when we cry to thee. Here us in thy clemency, and when thou hearest forgive. We have all been kept through another week, have had our bread and clothing from thee. Accept our humble thanks for these thy favors. Teach us to be always grateful, and help us in all our ways to acknowledge thee. Keep us in safety through another week. Suffer us not to be tempted. Save our eyes from tears and our feet from wandering. Remember, Lord, especially remember our Brother Lamb, who lies so sick to-day. His life is in thy hand; may it be thy will to spare him. Pity his anxi-